

WOMAN ACCUSES WORKING GIRLS OF RUINING HEALTH BY CABARET AND SALOON ROUTE

The most sensational witness for the bosses in their battle against the proposed 8-hour legislation for women testified before the 8-hour legislative committee that even 16 hours work a day is not too much for a woman and does not injure her health and that the working girls are injuring their health carousing in cabarets and saloons.

The woman was Mrs. Clara Mountler. In a long oration, self-laudatory, she introduced herself as having spent her life in the interest of working girls. She runs a club called the Chicago Girls' Club, which has an employment agency attached, at 118 S. Clark st.

"It is not long hours that injure the working women," she declared with a glitter in her eyes. "I will tell you what does it. I have visited cafes and cabarets and saloons and I know it is carousing that is injuring their health. The longer they work the less time they will have for carousing."

Rep. Madsen quietly told her that some scientists had said that it was the strain of long hours that led both men and women to seek stimulation in pleasure of this kind, but Mrs. Mountler reiterated again and again her statement that twelve hours was not a bit too much for a girl to work.

Under careful guidance of Dudley Taylor, who has recovered some of his spirits since he was severely rebuked for dragging out the hearing by questions that did not bear on the subject, Saturday, Mrs. Mountler said she had been in California when the 8-hour law went into effect. She told a sad tale of the women thrown out of employment. She could not be brought to admit that shorter working hours must necessarily mean more people employed. She flatly branded as untrue the report that Agnes Nestor had of the investigation which proved more people were

employed after the passage of this law and said that the bosses didn't tell the truth before such commissions.

Mrs. Mountler branded as false the entry in the minute books of the restaurant bosses, introduced during the waitresses' trial, showing that they paid some of the expenses of this club, and the sworn testimony of H. F. Marquis, secretary of the restaurant bosses' ass'n that the club was conducted by the Food Exchange ass'n and that Mrs. Mountler was kept there as matron.

She said that she has interviewed 6,000 girls in Chicago since last spring and 4,000 of that number had craved the privilege of working long hours.

Questioned by Elizabeth Maloney of the waitresses' union, Mrs. Mountler was forced to admit that her club was started at the time the union waitresses were on strike in some of the loop restaurants; that she got support from business men; that she charged girls 50 cents a month club fees and placed the majority of them in restaurants; that despite her positive assertion that waitress' work was not trying for 12 hours, much less 10 hours, her own knowledge of it consisted of six weeks.

She refused to answer some questions asked by Rep. Hicks. She declared the bosses had not asked her to give them this testimony, but that because of her deep and abiding interest in the working girls, for whose sake she has traveled around the country, pried into every profession, etc., etc., she stood there stating that the working girls carouse in saloons and cabarets and that longer hours of labor would save them from this carousing.

Other witnesses for the bosses were Wm. Sieck, 535 W. North av., retail merchant, who believed store work a sinecure for girls; Haskett,